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old leaven of Popish compulsion and arbitrary decision is too discernible, though the ostensible object was to abolish Popery. At the same time, it is pleasing to observe, that some of them were framed in a better spirit. In the clause prohibiting exaction of money, on the part of those appointed to visit the church, we may discover a regard for the rights and privileges of the subject; and, in the Act for the establishment of English schools in every parish, we behold a wise provision for diffusing knowledge and civilization throughout the land. Upon the whole, it may be observed, that, though the principal part of the crop sown at the season in question was tares, there was notwithstanding sown at the same time a portion of wheat.

F—.

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#### ON THE TOMBSTONES OF THE EARLY PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS OF IRELAND.

THERE is scarcely any subject less known, even to those who have made the history of this kingdom their peculiar study, than what relates to the first settlement, and early transactions of the Scottish Presbyterians in the North of Ireland. Yet this is a subject abounding not less with interest than originality, and well deserving the attention of any individual who has research, opportunities, and talents enough to engage in its investigation. The history of the events alluded to has certainly been less examined, than the improvements to which they led, and the important and permanent alteration which they produced in the general features of the country, would naturally seem to require. Nor is there a deficiency of facts and documents relative to such matters, from which to form an extended historical narration, interesting to the whole kingdom, but more particularly valuable to the North of Ireland, inhabited and rendered flourishing by the descendants of the enterprising men to whom I allude. Among other materials to which the writer of such a work would have recourse—chiefly, perhaps, as curious remains of antiquity, calculated to illustrate some parts of his subject—are the Tombstones of the early Ministers of the Presbyterian Church, several of which exist in the counties of Down and Antrim, and which frequently afford most excellent notices of the history of the times, by recording, not only the virtues and endowments of those who sleep beneath them, but also by alluding in distinct terms to their sufferings for the “true Evangele,” or stating whether they flourished during the triumph or persecution of their church. I have seen some of these, which it would require the patience of an “Old

Mortality" to decipher; though I neither know nor have heard of any that are to be found, except in the recognized depositories of the dead. To those who have never turned their thoughts to this subject, but who have read or heard only of the blood which was shed, the battles which were fought, and the enthusiasm that was displayed in Scotland, for the simplicity of the Gospel; it may, perhaps, be new and curious to learn, that such things were to be found in the North of Ireland: that here too, there have been enthusiasm and suffering for "conscience' sake"—and that in this country, the voice of humble piety has been raised upon the mountains, and the sword of the persecutor has been uplifted to disperse congregations of christian worshippers. Even from the brief hints of such circumstances, which, by due attention, may be properly authenticated; it is impossible for any one to contemplate with indifference, the tombs of those who lived and moved in scenes of this kind: though their external appearance presents nothing delightful or imposing to the eye of the antiquary; being, like the faith of those whose names they commemorate, plain and unadorned.

From the inscriptions on these tombs, a few of which I shall immediately proceed to transcribe, it may be perceived, that they generally inform us, indirectly it is true, whether or not the Presbyterians enjoyed at the time the free exercise of their worship. If nothing to the contrary be stated, it is to be presumed they suffered no molestation; but many of these tombstones, and certainly the most curious, are of a contrary description.—The first which I shall notice, as it is proper I should, is that of Edward Brice, acknowledged as the earliest minister who preached and promulgated Presbyterianism in Ireland. His grave and the ruins of his meeting-house (declared by strong and positive tradition, supported by every kind of probability, to have been the first structure regularly and permanently used as a place of worship for Protestant Dissenters in this kingdom,) will be found in Ballycarry, on the high road between Carrickfergus and Larne; and only twelve miles from Belfast. The inscription on his tombstone is in these words:—

Neare this lyeth the body of  
that faithful & emenent ser-  
uant of God Mr. Edward  
Brice, who begun preaching  
of the Gospell in this parish  
1613, continuing with great  
success while\* 1636, in wh.  
he dyed aged 67, & left two  
sons and two daughters.

\* The word *until* would appear to be the more proper and intelligible in this place.

The inscription then goes on to relate, in a few words, the history of his descendants; by which it appears, that they came to wealth and eminence in the land. All the printed accounts concur in placing the era of Presbyterianism, in this country, in 1621; and the discrepancy between this date and that of the preceding inscription, is accounted for in a most satisfactory manner by a tradition, which obtains universal credit among the people in the neighbourhood—that Edward Brice preached, for the first two years of his ministry, in an old church in Island Magee, now a ruin of considerable extent. It is probable, indeed, from various circumstances, upon which it is not necessary now to enlarge, that the old building, in Ballycarry, in which this grave-stone exists, was also a church which the former possessors had abandoned, or from which they were expelled. It may be inferred, from the inscription, that Mr. Edward Brice was one of those who enjoyed his religion and instructed his people without disturbance, and who was, perhaps, in common with many others of his connexion at this time, ordained by a Bishop of the Episcopal Church. His tombstone, and the ruins of his meeting-house, should be objects of veneration to the Presbyterians of the North of Ireland. The latter (probably the ancient church of the parish of Templecoran,) stands in a noble situation, commanding a beautiful prospect of Larne Lough, and Island Magee; and though not calculated to arrest the attention of the traveller by any architectural splendour, is certainly less known than its appearance and its history might naturally lead us to expect.

The next tombstone which I shall mention, is that of him who is understood to have been very nearly related to John Knox himself. It is in the grave-yard of Templepatrick, in the county of Antrim, and consists of these few words:

Here lieth the body  
of the Rev. Josias  
Welch, minister of  
Templepatrick, who  
died anno dom. 1634.

This inscription is cut upon a rough block of stone; but though so concise and unsatisfactory, there are some traditions connected with the introduction of this minister into Templepatrick, which are curious and characteristic of the times. I have heard an intelligent countryman deliver a long story that had been handed down to him from his forefathers, which went to relate, that Josias Welch having been expelled from Scotland, came over to Ireland, and became a regular and zealous preacher of the Presbyterian faith and discipline: that no privation discouraged him, or abated his ardour; but that, like other men of unwearied activity, he preached on the

mountains, and in the fields, to crowds of followers. The fame of his preaching at length reached the head of the Upton family, then residing in his Castle at Templepatrick, who invited Welch to take possession of the church in that place, a measure to which he promised his countenance and assistance. The Episcopal minister, however; obtaining private intelligence of this business, which seems indeed to have been rather arbitrary and irregular), resolved not to acquiesce without a struggle in such an arrangement; and, early in the morning of the day on which the Scottish preacher was to occupy his church, came himself, and took firm and determined possession of his accustomed pulpit. When Welch and his friends arrived at the place, they seemed first at a loss in what manner to proceed; but at length, doubtless after many words and much expostulation, it was found that neither party would submit, so that they were obliged to apply to force to settle the dispute. The Episcopalians were defeated in the contest, they and their minister driven from the church, Welch installed in the vacant pulpit by Upton, and the people, and ever after patronised and protected by the lord of the soil. I relate this tradition exactly as I have heard it, without vouching for its accuracy. It is farther recorded of Josias Welch, that he died in consequence of a cold, which he caught by preaching from an open window.

Close beside this tombstone, is another which I cannot but consider the most curious that has yet come under my observation. It covers the remains of one of the successors of Josias Welch, in Templepatrick; and is written in Latin, in the following words:—

## HIC

Christo uniti recumbunt beati  
cineres viri Dei venerandi Dni:  
Antonii Kennedi qui ad Fanum  
Patricii continuis decem lustris  
et tubus plus minus annis ortho-  
doxam Evangelii veritatem cul-  
tus divini puritatem ecclesiae  
disciplinam et pacem non minus  
fideliter quam faeliciter praedic-  
avit, propugnavit, et Coluit.—  
Quem vis nec dolus sacrilegae  
tubae de tramite recto flectere aut  
loco pallere potuere.—Quum tan-  
dem sincere Christum praedican-  
do et Christo vivendo multas  
animas Domino lucraverat suam  
Summo Spirituam Patri exultans  
reddidit 11mo Decembris 1697,  
anno etatis 83.\*

\* Here lie, in a state of happy union to Christ, the ashes of the venerable man of God, Mr. Anthony Kennedy, who at Temple-Patrick for more than 58 years (ten lustrums) faithfully preached, promulgated, and supported the true faith of the Gospel, the purity of Divine Worship, and the discipline and peace of the Church.—Neither the violence nor the subtlety of persecution could force or induce him to deviate from the right path: After having, by preaching Christ, and living devoted to Christ, made the souls of many rich in the Lord, his own soul at last returned with joy to the Father of Spirits, on the 11th December, 1697, in the 83d year of his age.

Here is a man, then, who appears to have suffered for his faith, and who is described after death as a person whom neither the violence nor subtilty of an opposing power could turn from the right path, or drive from his post. Mr. Kennedy was one of those who presented the address of the Irish Presbyterians to King William, on his arrival in this kingdom.

There is a tombstone which resembles the preceding in spirit and matter, in the church-yard of Larne, and which covers the ashes of Master Thomas Hall, a cotemporary of Anthony Kennedy. It is as follows :—

Here restes in the Lord the Body of the  
reverend and great master Thomas  
Hall, who continued a very worthy  
and faithfull pastor of the parish and  
a considerable pillar and ornament of  
this Church for about 50 years—who  
though he died Anno Dom 1695 and  
of his age 75 yet is most worthy to  
live in the memory of posterity to  
whom he hath left a rare example of  
faithfulness, gravity, and wisdom, as  
a minister of integrity and solid piety  
—as a Christian of constancy—as a  
sufferer in all vicissitudes of times for  
the truth and simplicity of the gospel  
of Christ, and after all of crowning his  
great virtues with most admirable hu-  
mility and modesty and so lived an  
eminent blessing to the world and de-  
parted therefrom much desired in it.

This inscription is very legible, having been renewed, a short time ago, by the Presbyterian congregation of Larne; but I am not acquainted with any thing farther relative to the person whose virtues and qualifications it so highly praises. It is worded in rather a curious and original style.

There are some more of these neglected tombstones in the country, which I shall make the groundwork of a subsequent paper.

G.

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#### ANECDOTES OF O'HANLON, AND OTHER CELEBRATED ROBBERS.

SIR,

Having been requested to give some account of the famous robber, Redmond O'Hanlon, I can only supply such particulars as my early recollections afford. He has been represented as descended from a very ancient family in the county of Armagh; but this appears rather doubtful, as the genuine descendants of that family exhibited a certain respectability of character to the last. One of them who resided